

Copiers create need for paper money facelift

By Roger Boye

United States paper money could get a major facelift in just 1½ years, sooner than some hobbyists had expected.

Top-level bureaucrats are scrutinizing several proposals, such as adding color or a three-dimensional optical device to currency, said Robert J. Leuver, director of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Officials want to make changes quickly to meet the counterfeiting threat imposed by improved copying machines.

In 1987, from 1,000 to 2,000 color copiers will be in use in the United States, Leuver told collectors attending the American Numismatic Association [ANA] convention in Detroit. Studies conducted for Uncle Sam indicate that 21 percent of the people who have access to such machines will attempt to duplicate money.

Leuver and others hope to give the Treasury secretary a "final design proposal" to consider next year. Assuming the secretary's speedy consent, there is a "strong possibility" that the revamped currency would be introduced in 1986, Leuver said.

● Several Treasury executives are criticizing a bill in Congress that would require lawmakers to approve any design changes of coins or currency.

For example, Mint Director Donna Pope predicted at the numismatic convention that if the legislation passed, there would be enormous delays in making such changes. Under the current policy that she supports, the Treasury secretary must approve design revisions on hard and paper money.

Rep. Frank Annunzio [D., Ill.], coauthor of the bill, believes the public would be kept better informed of proposed changes if Congress had to support them. Most experts say the bill has little chance of passage.

● Donn Pearlman won the Clemmy Award, the highest honor of the Numismatic Literary Guild, during ceremonies July 29 at the ANA convention in Detroit. Pearlman, suburban correspondent for WBBM Radio in Chicago, was praised for his outstanding journalism, among other things. The guild is an organization of 150 coin writers and editors.

● A rare two-inch medal depicting a phoenix rising out of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 is one of more than 3,000 collectibles to be sold in a mail-bid auction being conducted by a Rockford company.

The medal, valued at more than \$200, bears the inscription, "Made From Chicago Court House Bell." For a copy of the 84-page auction catalogue, send \$4 to World Ex-numia, P.O. Box 4143, Rockford, Ill. 61110. Deadline for mail bids is Sept. 4.